good jobs in the country itself. Many of the students having gone abroad do return to India after certain period and either take employment in various sectors or establish their own industries which further provide jobs to fellow Indians. This is a value addition to the country. The Government have also initiated various programmes and schemes to encourage young scientists and technologists. The Government of India also taken steps including increse in science and Technology outlays, creation of new scientific departments/ Organisations, delegation of enhanced administrative and financial powers to science and Technology Institutions etc.

India's Presence in Antarctic Region

1797. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of OCEAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are planning to increase its presence in the Antarctic region; and

(b) if so, what are the future plans to ensure a purposeful presence there?

THE MINISTER OF OCEAN DEVELOMENT (DR. MURLIMANOHAR JOSHI): (a) No Sir, The Government do not have any plans at present to increase its presence in Antarctica.

(b) The Government will continue to pursue research in line with the national policies and priorities, particularly in the areas of Atmospheric Sciences, Earth Sciences, Human Physiology, Biology, Communication and Engineering, etc., as in the past.

Enquiry into Death of Trainee Fitter in NE Railway

1798. SHRI DAWA LAMA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) under what circumstances, Shri Joydeep Das, Trainee Fitter, Mechanical (C & W), Eastern Railway, was electrocuted at Platform No.14 of Howrah Station on 7th October, 1999 leading to his death on 16th October, 1999;

(b) who ordered him to work at platform instead of carriage and workshop; and

(c) the details of reports and findings of enquiry into this incident?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) On 07-10-1999, on account of unprecedented torrential rains in Calcutta area, the Howrah Yard and Coaching Depot were completely water logged and all lines other than Platform lines were totally inaccessible. This caused a complete disruption of trains services and all the passengers in entire region were stranded. It was, therefore, decided, in the public interest, to run some trains by maintenance at the Platform line instead of the Coaching Depot which was inaccessible.

The rake of 3030 DN, Coal Field Express was placed at Platform Number 14 for safety examination for despatch as 3029 UP. Shri Joydeep Das was in the gang deputed to carry out safety examination of the rake. Shri Das, while performing his work was accidentally electrocuted due to discharge from the overhead 25 KV traction power line under excessively wet weather.

(b) As stated above, maintenance of rakes had to be carried out at the Platform instead of Coaching Depot due to unavoidable and extreme circumstances, entirely in the Public interest.

(c) A Committee of three Divisional Officers enquired into the case and it concluded that during performance of his duty. Shri Das was accidentally electrocuted due to discharge from overhead 25 KV power line under extremely wet conditions, not resulting from any negligence.

Travel Concession To Senior Citizens

1799. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether thers is any proposal to provide fifty percent travel concession to Senior Citizens; and

(b) if so, by when?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.